

**MINUTES OF THE
HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 6, 2007**

The regular session of the Auburn City Historical Design Review Commission was called to order on March 6, 2007 at 6:03p.m. by Chairman Merz in the Council Chambers, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn, California.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Kosla, Smith, Thompson, Worthington, Elder, Chrm. Merz

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Briggs, Kidd

STAFF PRESENT: Will Wong, Community Development Director; Reg Murray, Senior Planner; Steve Geiger, Associate Planner; Sue Fraizer, Administrative Assistant

ITEM I: CALL TO ORDER

ITEM II: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ITEM III: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 20, 2007 meeting were approved as submitted.

ITEM IV: PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEM V: PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

- A. Historic Design Review – 215 Maple Street (OTAPS Carriage House) - File HDR 07-5.** The applicant requests Historic Design Review approval for a 10' x 12' woodframe carriage house located at 215 Maple Street. *THIS ITEM WAS CONTINUED FROM THE FEBRUARY 20, 2007 MEETING.*

Planner Murray gave the staff report. The Old Town Auburn Preservation Society (OTAPS) owns the Victorian-era structure at 215/217 Maple Street. Next door to this building is the Historical Medical Museum. The current proposal is to improve the grounds of the property north/northeast of the main structure with the addition of new pathways and benches, and the addition of a 10'x12' wood frame carriage house. This will house an antique carriage.

The structure will have wood siding, two windows, a composition shingle roof and a pair of carriage barn doors. The colors will match those used on the adjacent Victorian building with a main building color of beige, and taupe and green trim.

The structure includes two options for the top of the roof. One is a cupola with a weather vane on top, the other is just the weather vane. The applicant requests the opportunity to use the cupola, depending on its' availability from the manufacturer.

Comm. Smith asked whether the height mentioned is to the top of the weather vane.

Planner Murray said it is to the peak of the roof. To the top of the weather vane (without the cupola), is another ± 4 feet.

Comm. Elder asked if the cupola would provide ventilation to the building.

Planner Murray suggested that this question be addressed to the applicant.

The applicant, Ross Carpenter who is the President of OTAPS said that the plan is for ventilation to be installed under the cupola.

Comm. Worthington asked for clarification about the "one hour wall".

Planner Murray explained that this is a one hour fire rated wall, which is a requirement of the City Building Department.

Comm. Elder **MOVED** to:

Adopt Resolution No. 07-3 as presented by the Historic Design Review Commission, approving a 10' x 12' wood frame carriage house located at 215 Maple Street.

Comm. Thompson **SECONDED**.

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| AYES: | Kosla, Smith, Thompson, Worthington, Elder, Chrm. Merz |
| NOES: | None |
| ABSTAIN: | None |
| ABSENT: | Briggs, Kidd |

The motion was approved.

B. Historic Design Review – 165 Elm Avenue (Auburn Reptile Company) – File HDR 07-7. The applicant requests Historic Design Review approval for one wall sign located at 165 Elm Avenue.

Comm. Worthington said she would abstain from voting on this item.

Planner Geiger gave the staff report. The wall sign will be 2' x 5 ½' in size. Staff received clarification from the applicant that the sign will actually be a painted white background with vinyl letters and logo. The colors of the reptile will be green, yellow and red. The sign size complies with the sign ordinance. Staff recommends approval of the sign.

Comm. Kosla asked if vinyl signs have been approved by the Commission in the past in this area.

Planner Geiger replied that he was unable to find examples of vinyl wall signs in the immediate area.

Comm. Kosla asked whether the current sign guidelines state that vinyl can or cannot be used.

Planner Geiger said the guidelines do not allow for plastic or synthetic materials unless due to specific location, message, or content they are given special approval in the design review process.

Comm. Smith asked if the lettering on the sign will appear exactly as they are shown in the color example shown in the Commissioner's packets.

Planner Geiger replied that it is his understanding that it will be the same.

The applicant, Shawn Thomas of 165 Elm Avenue stated that the signs will be exactly as shown in the picture.

Chrm. Merz asked Mr. Thomas if he considered anything other than vinyl material.

Mr. Thomas replied that vinyl is what the sign company offered, so nothing else was considered.

Comm. Kosla asked Comm. Smith if vinyl signs were allowed in the districts that were reviewed in the sign ordinance presentation that he and Comm. Worthington presented.

Comm. Smith replied that there were some, but due to the high quality of the vinyl it was not obvious that they were made of plastic.

Comm. Kosla **MOVED** to:

Adopt Resolution No. 07-4 as presented, approving one wall sign for Auburn Reptile Company located at 165 Elm Avenue.

Comm. Elder **SECONDED**.

AYES: Kosla, Smith, Thompson, Elder, Chrm. Merz
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: Worthington
ABSENT: Briggs, Kidd

The motion was approved.

C. Amendments to Historic Preservation Architectural Design Guidelines – (City of Auburn) – File HDR 07-1.

To consider amending the sign guidelines contained in the Historic Preservation Architectural Design Guidelines (Section VI. Commercial Design Guidelines, I. Signage). One of the proposed amendments would allow for signs to be constructed of plastic or other synthetic materials when these materials are determined to be of high quality and when they replicate the appearance of wood, metal, or other natural hard materials. Staff has prepared the proposed amendment based on previous direction given by the City Council. *THIS ITEM WAS CONTINUED FROM THE FEBRUARY 20, 2007 MEETING.*

Planner Geiger gave the staff report, outlining the background information pertaining to the amendment to the Historic Preservation Architectural Design Guidelines. The City Council directed staff to revise the guidelines to allow for plastic or synthetic materials in signs when they are of high quality and when they have the appearance of wood or metal. Staff contacted four sign companies and borrowed a number of examples of plastic and metal letters.

Some of the plastic letters have more rounded edges and a glossy finish which look more modern. Those with a sharper edge and a matte finish have a more historic appearance. The Gemini Sign Company, a leader in the sign industry, manufactures an “injected molded Minnesota letter”. Staff feels that due to the shape of the letters, they have the

appearance of a metal letter. The font is also a factor. Staff recommends that when possible, applicants be directed to use fonts that have a historical appearance rather than a modern appearance.

Another alternative material is black PVC foam with a thin aluminum finish. Staff feels this type of letter looks nice, and there is a cost saving to the applicant for this type of letter. The current guidelines do not acknowledge the use of vinyl in signs, however vinyl is what is now being used for most signs. Very few sign makers are making hand-painted signs. Therefore staff recommends that the wording in the guidelines be changed.

Staff intends to obtain samples of the recommended letters to show to applicants as examples of the types of letters that will be allowed, as well as examples of the letters that are not acceptable. All applicants will still be required to appear before the Commission for approval.

There was discussion about the new proposed wording of the guidelines.

Planner Geiger explained that the City Attorney was consulted for advice about what the Commission can regulate regarding signage. The Commission can suggest or recommend that certain "historical" fonts be used. The City Attorney stated, however, that the Commission may not prohibit the use of established company logos or fonts if the business chooses to use them. The Commission may regulate the size and location of the sign.

Staff will require that signs be consistent with the appearance of the building, both in color and in style.

Jerry Kopp with Uptown Signs introduced himself. He explained that one of the reasons for signs no longer being painted is that there is no longer cadmium in red paint, therefore it begins to fade in two years. Gemini signs can be made in any font style and the glossy appearance can be muted. There are certain fonts used for Historic signs, and they are guaranteed for life. He said that every new sign you see today is made of vinyl.

Comm. Worthington stated that she feels what is important is how the sign looks, and how it weathers.

Comm. Thompson said she is in favor of the proposed new wording.

Comm. Kosla **MOVED** to:

Adopt Resolution No. 07-5 as presented in Exhibit A, recommending that the City Council approve amending the sign guidelines contained in the Historic Preservation Architectural Design Guidelines (Section VI. Commercial Design Guidelines, I. Signage).

Comm. Thompson **SECONDED**.

AYES: Kosla, Smith, Thompson, Worthington, Elder,
Chrm. Merz
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Briggs, Kidd

The motion was approved.

ITEM VI: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT FOLLOW-UP REPORTS

- A. City Council Meetings
No report.
- B. Future Historic Design Review Commission Meetings
There will be an HDRC meeting on March 20, 2007.
- C. Reports
None.

ITEM VII: HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION REPORTS

Comm. Worthington reported that Tim DeWitt is considering applying for the 9th seat on the Historic Design Review Commission.

ITEM VIII: FUTURE HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ITEM IX: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Fraizer, Administrative Assistant